

# DRC DISABILITY RIGHTS CENTER - NH

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## **Disability Unscripted: 2020 Candidates on Inclusion & Accessibility Transcript of Pete Buttigieg: Concord NH, May 25, 2019**

<https://drcnh.org/videos/pete-buttigieg-unscripted-campaign-inclusion-and-accessibility/>

**DRC-NH Staff:** My question for you is, with one in five Americans experiencing a disability, what efforts have you taken as Mayor to reach out and engage and employ folks with disabilities in your office and how will you do that as President? And then, what efforts are you and your campaign taking to make sure that every campaign stop you have is accessible to people with disabilities?

**Pete Buttigieg:** First of all, thank you for your activism and your advocacy. This is very important to us in South Bend. We have an event every year where we recognize people with disabilities who are doing different kinds of jobs according to their ability in the community. We also recognize their employers, because we're trying to create a culture where people recognize what disabled people bring to the table and lift that up.

And we try to model that too. In fact, a pretty good Twitter follower right now is Emily Voorde, who's one of our key employees back home with the campaign. She started out as an intern with us in the Mayor's office and now she basically kind of runs our life in terms of travel and just has this great mind. She's also got OI and is in a wheelchair, and her voice, it's become pretty fun to watch some of the people involved in our campaign have a voice online to help others feel included.

So, that's just one example, but we are committed to making sure that our campaign and then eventually our administration models this. Part of this, as you know, has to do with policy, right? Making sure that on everything from the way people are paid, to the way we put teeth into the ADA, is looked after through federal policy. Part of it though is culture. It's bringing disability out of the shadows. It's lifting up the voices and the stories and the capacities of so many Americans, as you said, a huge proportion of Americans, and we need to make sure we lift that up. And we are working to get the best kind of advice we can on how to make sure that the kind of specific tactical steps we take is, again, going to reflect that too.

Because your point is well-taken about being able to access our events as part of how you can access our campaign. So, thanks for raising that, and please let us know as you see opportunities too, whether it's here on the ground in New Hampshire or more broadly, to make sure we're living up to that commitment.

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*Candidate video fades out to informational slide*

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